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THE TYPICAL CHARACTER OF ANGLO-JEWISH HISTORY¹.

WHEN the Jewish Historical Society was first founded, it naturally had to run the gauntlet of communal criticism. What institution indeed, however worthy, does not find carping critics among us? But they have their function, these candid friends, and this above all, that they enable us to answer out aloud what many think to themselves or only speak among themselves. Now among the criticisms of our candid friends there were two which had a *prima facie* appeal to our sense of justice. One was that there was not sufficient material to afford scope for the energies of a society. To this one might point out that even the very incomplete bibliography of the sources of Anglo-Jewish history compiled by Mr. Lucien Wolf and myself runs to something like 250 pages. To master the works enumerated in those pages, and to draw out the conclusions which they suggest, might easily afford life-work for a whole college of investigators. It is not scarcity of materials that troubles us, it is rather paucity of workers. It is only Mr. Lucien Wolf and a few others, who may be described as the "old gang," who care to dive into the musty archives of the past, to find here and there a novel and interesting clue to fresh aspects of the history of the Hebrew race in the British Empire. If our critics would become workers, we can guarantee to surfeit them with work.

But the other objection is more insidious, and cannot be

¹ The Inaugural Address of the Jewish Historical Society of England for the session 1897-98, delivered at Birmingham, Nov. 14, 1897.

dismissed so cavalierly. "You may have," say our critics, "any number of facts to collect and connect, but when you have collected and connected them, what are they? A number of insignificant details of personal lives. You chronicle small beer, and sour stuff even then. Before the Expulsion you have only to record the dealings of a number of usurers; after the Return you have mainly to record the doings of a number of nonentities who only cease to be nonentities when they cease to be Jews." I put our opponents' case, you will observe, in the strongest possible form, and perhaps in the strongest possible language. I do so because I have every confidence I can answer the strongest objection of this kind to your satisfaction.

I might begin by granting for a moment the validity of this second objection. Suppose Anglo-Jewish history is a small thing. It is at any rate our own, our very own. It tells the story how we come to be what we are. It may deal with only one thread in the web of general English history, but without that one thread the web would be so far changed, and to tear it out would be to destroy the pattern. Indeed it depends very much on one's standpoint whether one is to regard things as small. Mr. Rudyard Kipling, with all his merits, is not distinguished for any power of aphorism or social generalization, but he has given utterance to one significant statement which is encouraging or disheartening according to which end of it you catch hold of. "There is nothing great and there is nothing small," is his way of putting the paradox. By this he means, I take it, that events are so closely interwoven with one another that you cannot pick out one particular event for distinction without connecting it with other events that are not so distinguished, nor can you call these latter small, since they are necessary ingredients in the events that strike the world's eye. Take, for instance, one event which at first sight might appear extremely small. About eighty years ago a London Jewish congregation elected one of its members to the honourable post

of *Parnass* or Warden. That member declined the honour, whereupon the committee of management of the congregation attempted to put in force in his case an obsolescent rule which inflicted a fine upon any person thus refusing. What smaller, more insignificant event could one imagine? Yet it had by no means a distant connexion with the imperial fervour of this Jubilee year. One can trace its influence upon the map of Europe in the later revival of Turkey. It for a long time checked the growing influence of Birmingham in the counsels of the Empire, and was largely responsible for the existence of that somewhat anomalous being, the Tory working man. For, as you all know, it was owing to that rebuff that Isaac D'Israeli severed his connexion with the Synagogue and allowed Samuel Rogers to arrange for Benjamin Disraeli's baptism.

But I am not going to defend Anglo-Jewish history from the charge of triviality by showing that it has had some influence on the lives of a few eminent Jews who seceded from the Synagogue. It has larger aspects than that. As its name implies, it bears relation both to English history and the more general annals of the Jewish race. In both it has played a rôle by no means insignificant, though in no way predominant. But in both of them, as I conceive, it holds a position which is specially typical, and throws very instructive light both upon English and upon Jewish history. I propose devoting what I am to say to an attempt to bring out this typical character of Anglo-Jewish history.

Mathematical students are accustomed to regard with peculiar interest problems that require special methods for their solution. These they are accustomed to call "pretty" problems, and the world in general would feel inclined to say that it is the only thing "pretty" about their jejune art. Now the course of Anglo-Jewish history seems to me to present the historian, whether English or Jewish, with a number of these "pretty" problems, and we might therefore base our claims for its study on the intellectual

interest which it presents. It is divided, as you know, into three great divisions: before the Expulsion, the Intermediate Period, and after the Return. Each of these divisions has its own problem and its own typical character, and we may accordingly take them separately and in chronological order.

I. The Pre-Expulsion Period.

The Jews of early England have at any rate this distinction, that they came over with the Conqueror. We first hear of them about 1070: they were expelled in 1290. In the intervening 220 years they went through all the successive stages which characterized the position of the Jews throughout Western Europe in the Middle Ages. First comes favourable position under the immediate tutelage of the State; then popular commotion against them; then increasing restrictions, culminating in expulsion. There is not a country, or even a small principality, in Western Europe during the Middle Ages in which that process did not go on. But in England we can watch it from start to finish, and for that reason this division of Anglo-Jewish history is especially typical. The exceptional position of England in this respect is due to an almost mechanical reason. England was the first of European countries to centralize its government, and consequently we get a longer and more complete series of State documents in England than in any European country. For the twelfth century we have fuller information about the social and secular history of the Jews of England than of the Israelites of any other European country. From the beginning of the reign of Henry II, the great organizer of the English State, we can study in great fullness the relation of the Jews to the king and people of this country.

What was that relation? Mediaeval Europe attempted the colossal, but, as it proved, impossible, task of making all the members of civilization of one belief in the matters

of highest import. It was the savage idea and the ancient idea that a man could only belong to the State if he worshipped the State God in the customary way. That ideal had its good as well as its bad side. By making all the members of the State of one creed it gave a bond of union and a fund of common emotion from which to draw in times of national crisis. By applying that ancient ideal to mediaeval Europe the Pope and the Emperor gave a common basis to the civilization which was ultimately destined to conquer the world, and at the same time break down the barriers between the peoples which stood so much in the way of the general progress of humanity. But in attempting to carry out their ideal the secular and ecclesiastical authorities found in the way one intractable figure. The Jew refused to submit his conscience to the dictates of the State. The State replied by saying, "If you Jews cannot be members of the State religion, you cannot be members of the State." By associating Christian oaths with the entry to every reputable calling, the State combined with the Church to prevent the Jew from associating himself with the social life of his neighbours in the most natural and usual way. Almost every trade and calling was associated into a kind of religious confraternity into which Jews could not enter. Thus the Merchant Taylors associated themselves not alone to secure a monopoly of the trade in their hands, but to provide for masses for the soul of every individual Merchant Taylor. No Jew, by his own law and by the nature of the case, could join an association of this kind.

How then were Jews to earn their living, if all the ordinary callings were closed to them? Now the Church had set its face against all that in modern times we call capitalism, but which it called usury. No Christian man, under pain of excommunication, was allowed to receive back, for any money lent, anything more than the exact sum lent. This at once put an end to all great enterprise in a mediaeval Christian State, except when the money needed

for it had been already saved by the very persons wishing to carry it out. This principle has its advantages, even from an economic point of view. It prevented, or helped to prevent, the growing nationalities of Europe from being plagued by debt in the early stages of their career. It made their progress solid, if it rendered it slow. But the application of this principle enabled the Jew to fulfil a much-needed function in the economic development of Europe. It enabled the several States to rise out of the stage of barter. For all great enterprises like that of building castles and abbeys, the Jews performed the function which the modern banker carries out. Thus the great Cistercian abbeys of Yorkshire and the great abbey of St. Albans were enabled to raise their spires to the heavens by the financial aid of Aaron of Lincoln, whose house still remains in his native town, the oldest private dwelling-house of stone still standing in England. It fell into the king's hands at his death, with all his property.

For while the State did not stop either Christian or Jew from lending money on usury, it claimed any property which had been acquired in this way from Christian or Jew alike when he came to die. There are many instances on record of large fines being claimed from the estates of Christian usurers after their death. But as a Jew had no other means of gaining his livelihood than by usury, all the private property of the Jews thus became prospectively and potentially the State's, in England the king's. Hence came in another function for the Jew in mediaeval economics: besides being the banker he was also indirectly the tax-gatherer. He collected the spare cash of the country into a sort of sponge, and whenever the king or the noble, as the case may be, was in urgent need of money he took this Jewish sponge and pressed it. Where the nobles or barons were strong as compared with the king, as happened on the Continent, it was they who pressed the sponge. But in England the centralization of the king's power and of the king's justice gave the sovereign the chief authority,

and here it was the king who held the purse of the Jewry. There can be no doubt that Jewish usury helped to consolidate England at an earlier stage than any other European State, and it was partly, therefore, owing to the Jews that England became England before any other State of Europe assumed its final form.

But such a method of banking was onerously expensive. The Jews had the monopoly of lending, and they had no other means of gaining capital than by lending. Consequently the whole Jewish population had to be kept in luxury by the rest of the nation, who were forced to pay ruinous and famine prices for the monopolized gold.

As a matter of fact it was not the common people upon whom the pressure of Jewish usury fell. They were in a stage of barter, and did not need capital or coin. It was the smaller monasteries and the lesser barons who were mainly affected by it. It was accordingly from this class that their chief persecutions came. So far as the common people were against the Jews, it was not as usurers, but as miscreants or heretics, and it is only in times of religious excitement, as during a crusade, that we find popular attacks on the Jews. But with the smaller barons the Jews formed a continual object of attack during the thirteenth century. The great struggle was then between king and barons, and the king used his position as universal legatee of the Jewry to press hard upon the baronage. Consequently throughout the Barons' War we find the Jewish quarters of the great towns, like London, Lincoln, and Nottingham, being raided by the barons. The barons were nominally defeated, but in reality gained their way, and, as you know, established the first English Parliament. Edward I gained power by adopting the methods, both in war and in administration, of the barons, and also gave way to them on the question of the Jews. Mr. B. L. Abrahams, in the valuable essay on the Expulsion of the Jews, attributes, to my mind, too great importance to the religious motives for the Expulsion. The Pope had pro-

tested against their presence in the midst of Christian folk, and Edward, Christian and good Churchman as he was, expelled them. That may have been one of the motives for the Expulsion, but there were political and economic ones also. Edward I had "dished" the barons by adopting their policy in other respects, and did not care to keep up a continual source of irritation by retaining the Jewry, which enabled the king to get the barons within his power. Nor was there any longer any economic reason for their retention. They had been impoverished by the perpetual draining of their resources by the Exchequer, so that they had little capital to supply, and the rates at which they supplied it were ruinously high compared with their new rivals as bankers, the Italians and Cahorsins. The local maximum for interest or usury in those days was no less than 86 per cent. per annum. Religiously, financially, and politically, there was no place for the Jew in England at the end of the thirteenth century, and he had to leave.

That short sketch of the history of the Jews in this country before they were expelled is practically the history of the Jews in all Western Europe, allowing for local variations. The Jew was the banker in mediaeval Europe, and played an important part in bringing it out of a stage of barter and introducing the principles of capitalism, but he naturally became an object of contention between the powers in the State which were attempting to control it, and whenever these conflicting powers became reconciled the Jew, as a source of irritation, and an expensive one besides, had to go. The party that held the Jews' purse varied in different countries. In England and in most parts of Spain it was the Crown, in France it was the local baron, in Germany it was mainly the municipalities. So that whereas you find in England boroughs petitioning the king for the privilege of *not* having Jews within their limitations, in Germany, on the other hand, we find them claiming from the Emperor the right to hold Jews. But in England we can see the process clearly carried out from

start to finish—the play of national forces, with the Jew as a buffer; and for that reason the Pre-Expulsion division of Anglo-Jewish history is typical of all mediaeval Jewish history, and acquires considerable importance on account of this typical character.

I might prove the utility of this diagnosis of Anglo-Jewish history by applying it to what is in many ways the central problem of modern Jewish history in general. Why, of all the countries of Europe, did not Poland expel its Jews, so that ultimately in the sixteenth century it became the asylum of nearly all the Jews expelled from the West of Europe for the same reasons that they had been expelled from England? In the first place, there was no national Church in Poland Catholic because it was the meeting-ground of the two great Churches, the Roman, and the Greek orthodox. Each of these Churches had enough to do in struggling with the other, and did not therefore attempt to force the Jew within its pale. Again, there was no such conflict between the king and his nobles or his burghers, because the Polish king was elective and therefore always the puppet of the nobles. Consequently there was never any such central power in Poland as could expel the Jews as in the rest of Europe. As England is the type of mediaeval Jewish history so Poland is the exception, and the comparative study of the two gives us a key to the whole problem.

I have laid stress upon the constitutional and economic aspects of the Jewish question in mediaeval Europe because I believe they were the predominant factors in determining the characteristics of Jewish history. But I am by no means unaware of the influence of the Church as affecting the problem. In carrying out that fundamental principle, that a member of a State must belong to the State Church, Papal Christianity put a permanent barrier against a Jew becoming a citizen of any European State while the Papacy held sway over it. But it could only effect its ends by isolating the Jew and preventing him from associating

with his fellow-citizens. This it did by prohibiting the use of Christian servants by the Jews, by excommunicating all Christians who joined in the Jewish festivities, and, above all, by the institution of the badge which each Jew and Jewess had to wear, and so become marked out from the rest of the population. While all this is common to the whole of Christendom, we can study its effects in England as thoroughly as anywhere else, so that for this side of Jewish history England also becomes typical, and the study of Anglo-Jewish history may be regarded as the key to the study of Jewish history in general.

There is indeed one side of the history which seems at first sight little represented in these isles. What attracts one in the history of the Jews of Spain, for example, is the number of eminent personalities, like Jehuda Halevi, Abraham ibn Ezra, Moses Maimonides, and the rest who occur in connexion with the history. Now, strictly speaking, these magnificent figures do not belong to history so called at all; they belong to the history of literature if you like, but not to the history of the Jewish people and their relation to the States in which they lived. Curiously enough, too, some of the greatest Spanish Jews did not live in Spain at all. Abraham ibn Ezra was a wanderer all his life; Moses Maimonides, though born in Spain, passed all his mature life in Egypt. On the other hand, recent research has shown that English Jews were by no means without their literary men. I have myself reclaimed for England one of the most versatile of Jewish writers, Berachyah Nakdan, who turns out to have been an Oxford Jew. Several important grammatical treatises were written by English Jews; one or two poets have been found among them. The most familiar hymn of the great Day of Atonement was written by the chief figure in the sublime tragedy at York; and our late President, the Chief Rabbi, is preparing an edition of an important work summarizing the traditional statutes of Jewish Law, written by a London Jew. Altogether evidence has accrued showing

that English Jews of the early period joined in the intellectual movements of their time, and I am hoping that this society at one period of its career will publish a volume giving an account, both popular and scholarly, of the Hebrew productions of the early English Jews.

I trust now that I have proved that, at any rate for the first period of our history, the annals of the Jewish race in England vie with those of any other country in Europe in interest and in importance. They begin earlier, and they show more clearly the conflicting forces of national existence which led everywhere to expulsion. Our friendly critics must own that the study of this part of our history has important light to throw both on the history of England and that of the Jews in general.

II. *The Intermediate Period.*

It was generally thought till quite recently that between the Expulsion and the Return no single Jew had placed his foot upon English soil. But chiefly by the researches of Mr. Sidney Lee and Mr. Lucien Wolf, especially the latter, this has proved to be quite erroneous. Not to mention the fact that nearly throughout the whole period there were always to be found a number of Jewish renegades drawing their penny halfpenny a day and leading a life of idleness at the House of Converts in Chancery Lane, from time to time the Jews made sporadic visitations across the Channel, which have been recorded by these two observers. But before the sixteenth century these visitations are in truth very sporadic, and it is only towards the end of that century that we can speak confidently of Jews residing in England in any numbers. One of the most remarkable results of their presence here is the existence of a masterpiece of the English drama, Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. This, as Mr. Lee has shown us, was directly influenced by the remarkable case of Dr. Lopez, Queen Elizabeth's physician.

Now the thing to observe about these Jewish visitors in the Elizabethan and Caroline periods is that they are all of one type. Almost without exception they are Marranos, Spanish Jews who, while in their native country, professed Christianity, though secretly practising Jewish rites and preserving in all its intensity the Jewish spirit. The first London Jewish community which, as Mr. Lucien Wolf has so ingeniously shown, really obtained from Cromwell the right to openly profess their creed were almost all of this type. From the point of view of general Jewish history the return of the Jews to England is a particular instance of the spread of Marranos throughout the centres of European commerce on both sides of the Atlantic.

Now this is a movement of worldwide and of world-historic importance. The history of the Marranos is yet to be written, but when it has been adequately told I feel sure it will form one of the most romantic episodes in all Jewish and even in all history. The Marranos represented the Nemesis of the Spanish persecution of the Jews. It is usually said that the removal of such a large body of thrifty, industrious merchants and workers from the Iberian peninsula was one of the causes of the remarkable downfall of Spain, which held in the sixteenth century a position in European politics analogous to that of Russia at the present day. But against that statement must be placed the fact that Spain was at no time so predominant in European politics as at the time of the Armada, no less than 100 years after the expulsion of the Jews and Moors from Spain. If that expulsion had been so efficacious and ruinous in its effects it is curious that it had no influence for more than 100 years. We must seek elsewhere the causes of Spain's downfall, and among them I feel sure will be found the influence of the Marranos in diverting trade from their hereditary enemies. The history of the return of the Jews to England is an instance of this influence, and so even this part of our Anglo-Jewish history becomes typical of general movements in the annals of the Jews.

Here let me express my admiration for the remarkable researches on this part of our subject conducted by the first President, Mr. Lucien Wolf. Out of what seemed at first sight a few disconnected and trivial facts he has built up a consistent history of the hidden forces leading to the Return which bring it into connexion with the larger movements of English and world history. I have had the pleasure of watching by his side as he slowly built up his mosaic out of seemingly most trivial details. It has been a model of historic method, combining the most minute attention to detail and the widest grasp of general principles. I am hoping that he will contribute to the Jewish Library recently started by Messrs. Macmillan a volume containing the final results of his researches, which will form a narrative thrilling in interest and of the deepest possible significance. I feel I should apologize to him for daring to treat with the amateur eye a subject which he has made so entirely his own. But I only deal with it here in a most summary way and as an illustration of my main thesis, the importance and typical character of Anglo-Jewish history.

The seventeenth century in European history may be described as the Revolt of Europe against Spanish Ascendancy. The Revolt of the Netherlands, the Thirty Years' War, the European Colonization in North America are only episodes in the great struggle. Spain was the last European State, outside Russia, to retain the mediaeval principle that a man must belong to the State Church if he desires to be a member of the State. That, we have seen, was the principle that gave to the Jews their anomalous position in mediaeval Europe and in Russia of to-day. That principle was broken down by the resolute resistance of Holland and by the crushing of the Spanish Armada. It allowed a new era of toleration to arise in Europe, and prepared the way for the restoration of Jews to national citizenship. At the head of this anti-Spanish movement was the commonwealth of Holland, which was the first to

give toleration and citizenship to the Jews. It was, appropriately enough, from Holland that the founders of the present Anglo-Jewish community came.

The seventeenth century was, as the late Sir John Seeley has shown, the beginning of that epoch in international politics which finds its culmination at the present day. Commercial and specially colonial considerations began to rule in the minds of statesmen rather than considerations of denizenship or even religion. The two great antagonists were England and Spain, though afterwards France took up the rôle of England's antagonist. Both in commercial and in colonial matters the Spanish Jews settled in England took the side of their country of denization, and aided Cromwell with their intelligence, possibly with their capital. It was as a reward for this, as Mr. Wolf has clearly shown, that they received the Protector's support and were given formal permission to reside as Jews in England. We may say indeed that the Return was one of those effects of American influence on European politics on which the late Sir John Seeley so strongly insisted. It forms a section in that remarkable chapter of general Jewish history which should be devoted to the subject of the Marranos. But in the case of England the influence of the Marranos is most clearly seen at work; and here again, in this second part of our subject, Anglo-Jewish history is typical of the general annals of our race.

III. *The Return and Modern Period.*

In regarding the Return as a purely Marrano movement I have left out of account the other side of the question, how the Return presented itself to Englishmen. There was no doubt a large amount of sympathy for the Jews, because they represented the spirit of the Old Testament, which was itself the kernel of the Puritan movement. But they also represented a principle which had lately become predominant in English politics and

was avowed by Cromwell himself. The Independents claimed that every man had a right to worship God in his own way, and they were consistent enough to apply this principle to the Jews. After the Restoration a reaction took place, and nonconformity with the National Church became once more a barrier to national citizenship even in England. But the Jews were now no longer alone in such nonconformity, and their emancipation and the removal of their disabilities forms only one chapter in the long and honourable history of nonconformity in this country. The Jews took their place in a long series which may be said to have begun with Quakers and finished with Mr. Bradlaugh. The noble idea of toleration which owns Holland for its birthplace, where classic expression of it was given by the Jewish philosopher Spinoza, had now taken firm root on English soil, much to the advantage of the Jews. It is true that the earliest full emancipation of the Jews occurred in France after the Revolution. But we must not forget that for a moment at least, in 1753, the Jews had been released from their disabilities, and, further, that the toleration of France was really the result of the English teaching of John Locke. It was quite natural, however, and in accordance with the spirit of universal and of English history, that true and full emancipation, without any *arrière-pensée*, has been obtained by the Jews of England alone within the modern period. Whereas in the earlier times the history of the Jews in England is typical of their history elsewhere, in the modern period it shows a pleasing contrast.

One reason for the contrast depends on the fortunate incident of the period at which the Jews were formally permitted to take up residence again in England. The reign of Charles II is distinguished in the English constitution for the final disappearance of feudal tenures. The idea that no man could be truly independent unless he possessed land, which lies at the root of the feudal system, ceased to be operative in English law about that time,

though it still retained its social predominance in the condition of the country gentry. But from Charles II onward these became less and less prominent in the life of the nation, till in this century the mercantile and middle classes, to which the Jews had naturally attached themselves, became the ruling power in the nation, and admitted their colleagues to equal rights. Now what happened in England in the time of Charles II did not happen elsewhere in Europe for nearly 150 years. France began to get rid of her feudal trammels in 1789, Prussia in 1806, Austria and Italy about 1848, and even where the feudal fetters were removed from legislation they still affected, and even to the present day affect, social feeling. Part of the reasons why Jews have been universally and better treated here than on the Continent is because in spirit the Continent is still feudal. An amusing anecdote will perhaps illustrate this feeling which exists at the present day, and in a manner showing how it affects the Jews. A couple of German officers unacquainted with each other found themselves in a railway carriage, and proceeded to introduce themselves after the customary procedure. The first one rose with a formal bow, stating that he was "Von Adelberg"—the *von* of course indicating that he belonged to the order of nobles, the Adelberg implying the territory from which he inherited his title. The other officer responded with, "Von Greifenhagen." Now there happened to be a Jew travelling in this same compartment, and he thought that as information as to origin was being given and compliments were flying, he would join in the fun. Consequently he rose also, and bowing profoundly said, "Von Posen." The contrast between the feudal feeling and the mercantile spirit could not be brought out better, and much that we call anti-Semitism is really the outcome of the natural conflict between these two opposing forces. The conflict no longer exists in England, and that is one of the reasons that anti-Semitism can find no deep roots in this country.

But there are other and still more effective reasons for its non-appearance. The emancipation in England was gradual, and therefore the more permanent and thorough. The Jews had time to prove themselves worthy of admission into the national fold before the gates were unbarred. They took part in all sides of the national life so far as they were permitted. Our friends the critics are accustomed to refer with scorn to the fact that some of the Anglo-Jewish worthies of whom we are proud are only prize-fighters, champion light-weights like Dutch Sam and the rest. Yet I do not know that the exploits of these heroes of the P. R. did not help towards convincing Englishmen that Jews were men of like calibre with themselves, as much as the philanthropy of Sir Moses Montefiore or the scholarship of Isaac D'Israeli. In a similar way the exploits in the cricket field of our own day of Prince Ranjitsinghi have done more to give Englishmen communion with their Indian fellow-subjects than anything else I can mention. I for one shall never be satisfied of the complete assimilation of Jews in the English nation till one of them has rowed in a 'Varsity race or played in England *v.* Australia.

Another reason for this contrast between England and the Continent on which I am here insisting has been the predominance of the commercial element in the later annals of England. This of course is the other side of the disappearance of the feudal element, but it naturally brought the English spirit more into sympathy with Jews, who by their own exclusion from feudal circles have been throughout modern history obliged to confine themselves to commercial and mercantile pursuits. It is of course on this side of the national English life that Jews have had their chief influence in modern times. The distinguishing characteristic of English commerce is the extreme mobility of capital caused by the accumulation of such a mass of it in the city of London. Jews, by their hereditary experience and by their foreign connexions, have helped in this

development of English capitalism. If London is the clearing-house of the world, Jews have had some part in giving it that position. Another characteristic of English modern life and commerce is the marvellous colonial expansion of which we have seen such striking evidence this year. Here again English Jews have played their part in Australia, India, South Africa, and to a less degree in Canada.

But this colonial expansion has an aspect which brings it into connexion with the exceptional position of Jews in the British Empire. The English Jews typify a principle by which alone that marvellous expansion has been made possible. With the opening of the twentieth century the British sovereign will rule, I reckon, over no less than a quarter of a million of British Jews. But in India alone there will be nearly 60,000,000 Mahometans, 50,000,000 Buddhists, 200,000,000 Hindoos, besides innumerable smaller sects. In South Africa the British rule extends over a considerable number of savage pagans; in Canada and in Ireland Roman Catholics are in the majority. It would be impossible for the Empire to hold together if to the actual difficulties of consolidating such diverse secular interests there were to be added any attempt on the part of the State to interfere with the free exercise of religious belief. Religious toleration is a *sine qua non* for the British Empire, and the Jews, who were last to receive it on the part of the Empire, are thus the type of its predominance. It was no mere accident, it was one of those striking symbols which history so often affords, that Her Majesty on that imperial Jubilee day was welcomed to the capital of the British Empire by a Jewish Lord Mayor.

I have now sufficiently indicated, probably at too great a length, the typical character of Anglo-Jewish history in its three phases, as compared in the first two with other local sections of Jewish history, and as contrasted in the third. In the Pre-Expulsion Period English Jews passed more rapidly through the normal development from favour-

able position to expulsion than elsewhere in Europe. So, too, since the Return English Jews have again passed more rapidly through the stages from mere toleration to almost complete assimilation than has occurred with the Jews of the Continent. This may give us hopes that our own fortunate position only precedes by a few decades a similar state of affairs elsewhere. But in the meantime it can explain why the Jews of England have taken a lead on the two chief occasions of modern times when European Jews combined themselves to meet the common danger. In 1840, when the baleful spectre of the Blood Accusation raised its head at Damascus, it was Sir Moses Montefiore and the London Board of Deputies who took the lead in laying the spectre. Similarly, when in 1881 Russia determined to put into active force the mediaeval principle that a man must be a member of the State Church if he is to be a member of the State, it was a band of English Jews that led the European Jewry in coping with the colossal evils that resulted from that determination. It is the proudest memory of my life that it fell to my lot to draw the attention of Europe in the pages of the *Times* to the terrible persecutions which the Jews were suffering in Russia, and I can also recall with pride that I have since been in a position as secretary of the Russo-Jewish Committee to aid in my small way the heroic efforts made by a small band of devoted spirits, among whom should be especially named Sir Samuel Montague, Mr. N. S. Joseph, and the late Sir Julian Goldsmid, to cope with the terrible Russian evil. When the tale of that struggle comes to be told it will be found indeed sufficient by itself alone to redeem the modern period of Anglo-Jewish history from any charge of insignificance or triviality.

You see I base my apologia for our study on the ground that it deals with the action and interaction of great world-historic forces which find their clearest presentation in Anglo-Jewish history. But historic forces act through individuals, and we can only display their operations by

tracing their influence upon individuals. Hence the treatment of Anglo-Jewish history must deal, in the first place and predominantly, with the lives and careers of single personalities. Here, at the end of our inquiries, we find meeting us that objection of our critics that met us at the start. They say that in the modern period at least we deal with a mass of unimportant individuals. By this they mean that very few of the English Jews of the past, and perhaps still fewer of the English Jews of the present, fill any large place in national English life. That may or may not be true, but it would apply equally to any *section* of modern English history. One of the marked characteristics of modern civilization is the great insignificance of the individual.

"The individual withers and the world is more and more."

That, curiously enough, is one of the developments of national greatness. As the Empire widens, it becomes more and more difficult for any one to fill a really large place in its annals. What with *Who's Who*, *Men of the Time*, and other collections, it really becomes increasingly easy to be a "celebrity," as I have found with pleasant surprise. To be really celebrated nowadays is far more difficult, owing to the mass of celebrities who stand for a moment in the world's limelight, and then get jostled out of place for the next comer. We need not therefore trouble our minds with the comparative absence of really celebrated men from the annals of Anglo-Jewry. Our attention need only be directed to the great historic forces moving the masses, and these, as I have attempted to show, are exemplified in modern Judaism in England as strikingly as anywhere in the records of Israel.

Anglo-Jewish history, like all Jewish history, is the outcome of world-historic movements, and it is that which gives it its dignity and importance. I have said it often enough, yet cannot sufficiently often repeat it, that the history of Israel is the great living proof of the working of

Divine Providence in the affairs of the world. Alone among the nations Israel has shared in all great movements since mankind became conscious of their destinies. If there is no Divine purpose in the long travail of Israel, it is vain to seek for any such purpose in man's life. In the reflected light of that purpose each Jew should lead his life with an added dignity. The consciousness of the great deeds and unmerited sufferings of our ancestors should help us all at the time when ignoble temptations are to be withstood or the familiar, yet imperative, calls of duty are to be answered. We English Jews have a further incentive to the higher life. As we hold to the past as Jews, we can look forward to the future as Englishmen, now that we have been admitted on the closest terms into the great nation with whose future history that of the habitable globe is inextricably bound up. A study like that of Anglo-Jewish history, which thus deals with the great world movements of the past, and connects them with noble hopes for the future, can surely claim the interest of all Englishmen and Jews who have a care for the destinies of mankind.

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